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ABSTRACT

This survey of 1,082 adults (a national probability sample) indicates support for increased aid to education. The majority of this sample preferred the federal government as the principal source of new funds, although it emphasized the importance of keeping control of education at the local and state levels. According to the majority, additional funding should be devoted to remediation in basic subject areas (such as math and reading), to assistance for physically and emotionally handicapped students, and to alleviation of crowding in classrooms. Money should not be spent on new schools, expanded athletic programs, or additional school administrators. Taxes should not be increased to provide additional educational funds. Money for the schools could come from budget cuts in foreign aid and the space program, according to the majority of the sample. (DS)

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**A STUDY OF
CONSUMER ATTITUDES
TOWARD FINANCING THE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TOPLINE PRESENTATION**

EA 008 228

MAY 1974

JWT

**PREPARED FOR:
THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSN.**

**RESEARCH & PLANNING DEPT.
J. WALTER THOMPSON COMPANY**

PURPOSE

To provide information to assist NEA in its efforts to increase federal funding of public schools.

STUDY CONDUCTED

- April, 1974
- National probability sample projectable to all adults (age 18 and over) in the contiguous United States
- 1082 completed interviews

I

THE CONGRESS

WHAT ABOUT CONGRESS GETS YOU MAD OR UPSET?

	All People (1082)
<u>SLOW, INEPT, DIVIDED (Net)</u>	<u>30</u>
Slow in acting/take too long to accomplish anything	18
Inept/indecisive/do no function properly	12
They are divided/they should get together	4
<u>INABILITY TO ACT ON WATERGATE</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>DISHONEST/CORRUPT</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>NEED TO DO MORE (Net)</u>	<u>10</u>
Do not do enough to control inflation	5
Not enough time devoted to energy/gas shortage	3
Should be more concerned with domestic affairs	2
Should devote more time to crime prevention	1
<u>SPENDS WRONGLY/SPENDS FOOLISHLY (Net)</u>	<u>8</u>
Raising their own salaries	3
Spending incorrectly/foolishly	2
Criticism of tax structure	2
Too much money given to welfare	1
<u>SHOULD DO MORE FOR SOCIAL WELFARE</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>THEY DON'T COOPERATE WITH THE PRESIDENT</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>EVERYTHING IS WRONG WITH CONGRESS</u>	<u>2</u>
Nothing, they are doing a pretty good job	15
Don't know	16

II

GOVERNMENTAL SPENDING PRIORITIES

FOR WHICH OF THESE SHOULD THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SPEND (MORE) (LESS)?

	All People	
	Spend More	Spend Less
	(1082)	
Medical research	62%	2%
<u>Public elementary and secondary schools</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>3</u>
Veterans benefits	35	2
Pollution and environmental control	29	7
Housing and urban renewal	27	12
Colleges and universities	26	7
Public welfare programs	20	27
Agricultural research	19	4
National defense	13	15
Crop control and incentives	9	9
Space program	6	47
International relations	4	22
Foreign aid	2	57

Q. 2/3

FOR WHICH OF THESE SHOULD THE STATE GOVERNMENT SPEND (MORE) (LESS)?

	All People	
	<u>Spend More</u>	<u>Spend Less</u>
	(1082)	
State medical and mental health facilities	56%	1%
<u>Public elementary and secondary schools</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>3</u>
Consumer protection	32	7
State police and penal system	31	6
Parks and recreation areas	28	13
Highway construction and maintenance	27	15
State college and university system	23	9
Welfare programs	16	41

Q. 4/5

FOR WHICH OF THESE SHOULD THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPEND (MORE) (LESS)?

	All People	
	<u>Spend More</u>	<u>Spend Less</u>
	(1082)	
Law enforcement and crime prevention	53%	4%
<u>Public elementary and secondary schools</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>4</u>
Road construction and maintenance	29	11
Mass transportation	28	19
Water and sewage system	24	6
Parks and recreation areas	24	11
Fire prevention and control	23	2
Trash and refuse collection	22	7

Q. 6/7

To Summarize

- All levels of government should spend more on education

. only medical' needs, law enforcement higher

- Federal should cut foreign aid, space program
- State should cut welfare spending

III

WHO SHOULD PROVIDE NEEDED SCHOOL FUNDS?

WHICH ONE GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL SHOULD PROVIDE
NEEDED ADDITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDS

	All People (1082)
Federal	51%
State	25
Local	14
Don't Know	<u>10</u>
	100

Q 17

WHY ADDITIONAL MONEY SHOULD COME FROM THE
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

(Among those who picked Federal government)

	<u>Total</u> <u>(525)</u>
<u>THEY HAVE THE TAX MONEY (net)</u>	<u>69%</u>
They have the money/they have biggest source of money	54
It's our tax money/we pay taxes/pay most money to them	18
Fairer distribution/let them share tax money with needed areas	5
<u>THEY ARE (SHOULD BE) IN CONTROL (net)</u>	<u>18</u>
Should help financially/they should do more (emphasis on moral obligation)	14
They have overall control, so they should pay more/they tell us what to do, they have their say, so should pay	2
They should be in control of education/ should be responsible	2
<u>SHOULD CUT DOWN ON OTHER SPENDING (net)</u>	<u>15</u>
Should spend less/should cut down on other spending	7
Should spend less on foreign aid/spending too much overseas	6
Should spend less on military	1
Should less on space program	1

WHY ADDITIONAL MONEY SHOULD COME FROM THE
STATE GOVERNMENT

(Among those who picked State government)

	<u>Total</u> <u>(279)</u>
<u>THEY HAVE TAX MONEY (net)</u>	<u>47%</u>
State has plenty of money/has more money	22
It's our tax money/we pay taxes	15
Fairer distribution/let them share tax money with needed areas	10
State is recipient of revenue sharing/state should pass on the money from federal government	1
<u>THEY ARE (SHOULD BE) IN CONTROL (net)</u>	<u>46</u>
They should be in control of education	34
Should help financially/they should do more	12
They have overall control, so they should pay more	1
<u>SHOULD REDUCE FEDERAL CONTROL AND BUREAUCRACY (net)</u>	<u>10</u>
Want to minimize federal control/reduce federal government's control	6
Too much red tape and bureaucracy with federal government/too much money spent on paper work and administrative duties	4
State government is more qualified to know the needs/ state is more aware of needs	5
Should cut down on other spending	1

WHY ADDITIONAL MONEY SHOULD COME FROM
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

(Among those who picked Local government)

	<u>Total</u> <u>(167)</u>
They should be in control of education	68%
<u>THEY HAVE TAX MONEY (net)</u>	<u>16</u>
It's our tax money/we pay taxes	7
They have plenty of money	4
Fairer distribution/fair distribution of money to all schools	4
<u>SHOULD REDUCE FEDERAL/STATE CONTROL AND BUREAUCRACY (net)</u>	<u>6</u>
Want to minimize and reduce federal/state control	5
Too much red tape and bureaucracy with federal and state governments	1
Local government is more qualified to know needs/is aware of needs	7

Q/18

PORTION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDS BELIEVED TO BE CURRENTLY PROVIDED
AND PORTION FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE

	<u>All People</u>	
	<u>Currently Provided</u> (1082)	<u>Should Provide</u> (1082)
Over 50%	4%	13%
50%	8	22
30 - 49%	15	16
16 - 29%	19	16
Under 16%	24	11
Have no idea	<u>30</u>	<u>22</u>
	100	100
Median estimate/desire	25%	45%
1973 Median	30%	50%

PORTION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDS BELIEVED TO BE CURRENTLY PROVIDED
BY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

by Whether Have Children In Public School

	All People (1082)	Have Children in Public School (373)	Do not (707)
50% or more	12%	10%	13%
30 -49%	15	18	14
16 -29%	19	20	19
Under 16%	24	24	24
Have no idea	<u>30</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>30</u>
	100	100	100
Median Estimate	25%	25%	25%

PORTION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDS FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE
by Whether Have Children In Public School

	All People (1082)	Have Children in Public School (373)	Do not (707)
Over 50%	13%	13%	13%
50%	22	22	23
30 - 49%	16	18	15
16 - 29%	16	17	15
Under 16%	11	12	10
Have no idea	<u>22</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>24</u>
	100	100	100
Median desire	45%	43%	47%

WHICH ONE OF THESE SOURCES SHOULD PROVIDE NEEDED
ADDITIONAL SCHOOL FUNDS?

	<u>All People</u> (1,082)
Reduce other public spending and shift funds to public schools	49%
Do not provide more funds -- insist on schools working within current budget	17
Raise taxes	14
Charge tuition fee	6
None of these	4
Don't know	11

Q. 14

ATTITUDE OF (MOST CONGRESSMEN) (YOUR CONGRESSMAN) TOWARD VOTING
FOR ADDITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDS

	All People	
	Most Congressmen (1082)	Your Congressmen (1082)
<u>Favorable</u>	<u>54%</u>	<u>59%</u>
Definitely Favor	10	17
Probably Favor	44	42
<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>11</u>
Probably Not in Favor	24	10
Definitely Not in Favor	4	1
<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>30</u>
	100	100

Q 19/20

To Summarize

- Federal government should be level principally responsible for needed funds

Because they have the money

- But control should rest with local/state governments.
- Current/desired federal commitment higher than reality
- Similar for people with/without children
- But no additional taxes desired

IV

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

WHERE PUBLIC SCHOOL SPENDING SHOULD BE INCREASED, IF FUNDS AVAILABLE,
DECREASED, IF FUNDS NOT AVAILABLE

	<u>All People</u>	
	<u>Increased</u> (1082)	<u>Decreased</u> (1082)
Special programs for students weak in reading, mathematics, etc.	47%	1%
Special education programs for physically/ emotionally handicapped	45	1
Reducing number of students per class	37	5
Student guidance and counseling	28	4
Special education programs for socially/ culturally disadvantaged	26	5
Hiring additional teachers	24	11
Health services	18	3
Modernizing/rebuild schools	18	16
Salary increases for teachers	18	15
Buying new text books	17	6
Special programs for above average students	17	13
Audio-visual teaching equipment	15	9
Building new schools	14	21
Athletic program	11	17
School administrators	4	23

(CARD)

Q. 15

ARE THE LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS GIVING YOU YOUR MONEY'S WORTH?

By Whether Have Children In Public School

	<u>All People</u> (1,082)	<u>Have Children in</u> <u>Public School</u> (373)	<u>Do Not</u> (707)
Getting money's worth from public school	47%	58%	42%
<u>Not</u> getting money's worth	34	37	33
Don't Know	<u>19</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>25</u>
	100	100	100

WHY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE BELIEVED TO BE GIVING MONEY'S WORTH
(Among those who said public schools are giving money's worth)

	<u>Total</u> <u>(508)</u>
<u>Good Schools, Good School System (Net)</u>	<u>45%</u>
Schools are good/they are doing a good job/ it's a good school system	34
Schools are better now than they were in past	5
They are better than other schools	3
It was good enough when I went to school	3
<u>Good Educational Program (Net)</u>	<u>25</u>
They have a good education program	21
Special programs/courses	5
<u>Have Good Teachers</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Children are doing well</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>New Facilities, Modernized Schools, Equipment (Net)</u>	<u>9</u>
New facilities/new schools are being built/ improving already existing schools/well maintained schools	7
They have good equipment/supplies	3
<u>Education is so important/schools are an investment in country's future</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Operate within their budget</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>No discrimination problems in school</u>	<u>1</u>

WHY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE NOT BELIEVED TO BE GIVING MONEY'S WORTH

(Among those who said public schools are not giving money's worth)

	Total (391)
<u>Educational System is Bad (Net)</u>	<u>32%</u>
Educational system is inadequate/they don't teach enough/system is bad/children are not getting a good education	29
Educational system is getting worse/children are not getting the good education they used to get	4
<u>Teachers not qualified to teach</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>Overcrowding/Lack of Individual Attention (Net)</u>	<u>15</u>
Schools are overcrowded/too many students in classrooms	11
Children do not get attention/need more individualized attention	6
<u>Inadequate Facilities and Supplies (Net)</u>	<u>11</u>
Schools are in bad condition/not maintained	8
Lack of equipment/supplies/materials	4
<u>Inadequate Educational Program (Net)</u>	<u>10</u>
Not enough courses, programs offered	4
Unnecessary programs, courses offered	3
Lack of innovation in teaching programs	2
<u>Lack of discipline in schools</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Waste Money (Net)</u>	<u>8</u>
Money is misused/wasted	3
High administrative costs/administrative costs should be decreased	3
Teachers' salaries are too high	2
<u>Schools do not have enough money to do the job</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Disapproval of bussing</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>There are racial problems</u>	<u>2</u>

SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN COMMUNITY

by Whether Have Children In Public Schools

	All People (1082)	Have Children In Public School (373)	Do Not (707)
Newspapers	40%	39%	41%
Radio/television	29	20	34
Parents of students	24	19	26
My kids	19	49	4
Students	18	19	17
Teachers	17	26	13
School board members	8	13	6
I know someone who works for the system/ I work there	2	4	2
PTA/PTA literature	2	4	1

Q. 13

To Summarize

- Additional funds should be used to
 - help students weak in math, reading, etc.
 - help physically, emotionally handicapped
 - alleviate crowding
- But not for
 - school administrators
 - athletics
 - new schools
- Public schools are only fair
 - poor system responsible

CONCLUSIONS

- People aware of need for government to reorder priorities in favor of more aid to education.
- The federal government is seen as the principal source of new funds (with state second)
 - but by shifting funds, not by increasing taxes.
- A distinct concern regarding federal funding is that control remain at state/local levels
- A majority see congress and their congressman as favoring additional federal funding
- Additional funding should be used selectively
 - tutorial courses
 - help physically, emotionally handicapped
 - reduce class size
- People are not especially satisfied that the schools give them their money's worth
 - reasons are varied, but "the system" is seen as inadequate.

IMPLICATIONS

The public will back NEA in seeking further federal funding; even today's levels are deemed too low.

But it must be made clear that control will remain at state & local levels.

Calls for cuts in foreign aid or space programs would be favored to provide such moneys.

Further, they expect additional funds to be used for strictly educational/remedial purposes

- tutor students weak in their studies
- help the physically & emotionally handicapped.